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American ecologists who issue several papers a year, giving the results of a few days or weeks of study, may well follow the example of MASSART, who has minutely studied his restricted Belgian littoral in every season for fifteen years and more.—H. C. COWLES.

A new manual of Rocky Mountain botany

To those familiar with the *Manual of the botany of the Rocky Mountain region* which has been the standard field book for that section of the country for practically a quarter of a century, the appearance of a revised edition² will appeal with special interest. The territory covered by the present volume remains essentially the same as in the original edition, namely the Rocky Mountain region from Montana and southern Idaho to northern New Mexico and Arizona.

The text in the new edition has been entirely recast; the arrangement of families has been brought into the sequence of ENGLER and PRANTL; the descriptions of the older species in many cases have been rewritten in the light of more complete material and printed in uniform type; the results of taxonomic researches made on the flora of the region during recent years have been incorporated with few exceptions, thus bringing the manual to date; concise and well-contrasting keys have been placed at the beginning of all the larger genera; bibliographical reference is made to the original publication of species and varieties recognized; and limited synonymy is given, particularly wherever a change of name or new combination has been made. These are the salient features which characterize the revised edition.

The circumscription of families continues unchanged; and it is a pleasure to see such natural groups as Leguminosae and Compositae remain intact. The most striking contrast, however, when compared critically with the first edition, is in the matter of generic limitations. Here the reviser has had a difficult task, because of the very great botanical activity in exploration and taxonomic publication in recent years and the tendency toward segregation. Thus the effort to bring together in perfect harmony and to bestow proper value on all genera and species that have been proposed during the past twenty years from the Rocky Mountain region alone has been no light undertaking. And to be absolutely consistent would require essentially a monographic knowledge of every group represented within the limits of the flora. The taxonomist, therefore, may find himself at variance with the treatment of certain groups as delineated in the text. For example, *Batrachium*, *Ranunculus*, *Halerpestes*, *Onagra*, *Anogra*, *Pachylophus*, *Lavauxia*, *Gaurella*, *Galpinsia*, *Meriolix*, and *Taraxia* receive equal generic recognition; while other recently segregated groups like *Saxifraga*, *Astragalus*, *Euphorbia*, and *Mentzelia* have been retained in their broader sense, as they are

² COULTER, JOHN M., *New manual of botany of the Central Rocky Mountains (vascular plants)*, revised by AVEN NELSON. 8vo. pp. 646. New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago: American Book Co. Actual date of publication, December 22, 1909.

usually defined. Hence in the treatment of genera a somewhat intermediate course has been followed.

In the interpretation and definition of species the work is conservative; in fact many of the recently proposed Rocky Mountain species have been reduced to synonymy. All categories subordinate to the species are treated uniformly under the trinomial, without further indication as to the supposed relationship to species; and it is only in the summary that we learn incidentally these are all regarded as varieties. The flora contains according to the summary given 116 families, 649 genera, 2733 species, and 186 varieties. This is by no means an excessive number for such a diversified region. A "list of new names and combinations" is also appended, which totals 169. Some of these combinations seem scarcely justifiable; for example, "*Krigia virginica* (L.) A. Nels." This is a name taken up for *K. amplexicaulis* Nutt. apparently on the basis of absolute priority, but which is in direct violation of section 7, article 53, of the International Rules of Botanical Nomenclature. A very complete and convenient index, including scientific and common names, arranged similar to that of the seventh edition of GRAY'S *Manual*, concludes the volume.

The press work is excellent, and there are comparatively few typographical errors. On page 529, under *Erigeron ramosus*, the date of publication for the *Preliminary catalogue*, etc., is given as "1788," a mere typographical error for 1888. On the whole the revised edition gives a concise, reasonably complete, inexpensive, and in general conservative treatise on the flora of a region which is always fascinating to the naturalist; and the clear-cut keys, and brief and lucid descriptions render the book particularly well adapted for the field identification of species. The botanical public is to be congratulated on having the revision of this well-known manual made by one whose continued activities in the field and extended knowledge of the Rocky Mountain flora have peculiarly fitted him for the work in hand.—J. M. GREENMAN.

NOTES FOR STUDENTS

Current taxonomic literature.—O. AMES (Phil. Journ. Sci. Bot. 4:593-600. 1909) under the title "Notes on Philippine orchids with descriptions of new species I" gives critical notes on several known orchidaceous plants and describes 3 species hitherto unknown.—O. BECCARI (*ibid.* 601-639. *pls.* 30, 31) has published, as new, 20 species and 7 varieties of Philippine palms.—W. BECKER (Beih. Bot. Centralbl. 26:1-44. 1909) has issued the first of a series of articles on the taxonomy of European violets.—A. CHEVALIER (Journ. Bot. 22:112-128. 1909) under the title "Diagnoses plantarum Africae" has published several new species of flowering plants, including a new genus (*Leocus*) of the Labiatae.—H. CHRIST (Journ. Linn. Soc. 39:213-215. 1909) describes new species of ferns, 2 of which are from the Philippines.—C. CHRISTENSEN (Bot. Tidsskr. 29:291-304. *figs.* 15. 1909) has published a new genus (*Stigmatopteris*) of ferns, based on *Polypodium flavopunctatum* Kaulf. (*Aspidium rotundatum* Willd.) and refers thereto 12 species from tropical America.—W. W. EGGLESTON (Bull. Torr. Bot.